# HSSCO ANNUAL STATE PROFILE REPORT Activities for January – December 2006

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# A. Briefly describe your accomplishments in the following areas. Where possible, indicate the goals from your work plan and the desired and actual outcomes.

 Help build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services for all lowincome children. Include a description of how you are supporting Head Start-child care-pre-kindergarten collaborations and Head Start-pre-kindergarten collaborations at the state and local levels.

Iowa's main goal in this area was to support <u>Early Childhood Iowa (ECI)</u>, a early childhood system development effort supported by the state's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant. The five goal areas of ECI embrace comprehensive services including health, education, family support and child care. During 2006, the State Collaboration Office (SCO) coordinator served as co-chair of the Governance, Planning and Administration Component Group, as well as serving on the Resources and Funding and Professional Development component groups and ECI's leadership team, the ECI Co-Chairs. The Governance group completed the ECI Structure and Operational

Guidelines document, created a uniform on-line membership process and developed alignment between the ECCS plan and the wider ECI strategic plan.

Iowa's SCO worked with the Resources and Funding group to conduct an audit of the state's budget with respect to spending on children under the guidance of Kay Johnson from Project THRIVE. This analysis will help identify coordination needs among state budgeting areas.

In 2006, ECI also assumed control over a long-standing collaboration of activity of the Iowa HSSCO, the Iowa Early Care, Health and Education Congress. This annual event, now in its fourteenth year, promotes broad statewide coordination among human services, health and education sectors at a state and local level. In 2006, 400 individuals participated including 40 from Head Start representing 11 (of 18) grantees.

The most significant accomplishment of 2006 was the expanded access to comprehensive services that came through securing support from across early childhood for Governor Tom Vilsack's comprehensive legislative package dubbed "Iowa Strong Start." The package included many proposals that mirrored strategies in the ECI strategic plan, many which will provide direct benefit for Head Start children:

- New Preschool Initiative: to increase access by Iowa four year-olds to a quality preschool experience.
- Statewide Family Support and Parent Education Coordination: to improve the coordination and quality of a family and parent support services.
- Iowa Access to Baby and Child Dentistry: to increase capacity of communities to provide oral health services and improve the oral health status of low income children.
- Healthy Mental Development: to address the social and emotional well-being of 0-3 children.
- Quality Rating System: to expand the system's critical infrastructure, technical assistance and provider participation.
- Iowa Community Empowerment: to continue financial support for Community Empowerment to continue technical assistance to communities and to the system development work of Early Childhood Iowa.
- Shared Visions: to continue funding for Iowa's state-funded at-risk preschool.

All of these efforts were funded in some manner during the 2006 legislative session.

The objective in this area from the Iowa HSSCO work plan was the development of a comprehensive, compelling and unifying vision for all Iowa's young children and their families In a recent survey of 147 Head Start and collaboration partners in Iowa, 89 percent thought the office was somewhat or very effective in realizing this objective.<sup>1</sup>

Head Start-child care-pre-kindergarten collaborations and Head Start-pre-kindergarten collaborations at the state and local levels.

The Governor's Smart Start initiative resulted in new funding for preschool scholarship in 2006. Iowa SCO coordinator worked with Community Empowerment to ensure rules and guidance for the funding encouraged local areas to direct scholarships to Head Start programs to served overincome children. The office also set up a meeting among the Community Empowerment State Coordinator, Iowa Head Start directors and state Community Action agency executive directors to discuss local collaboration concerns. Iowa saw a ten percent increase in the number of local Community Empowerment areas using their funding to support over-income or wait-listed children within Head Start programs. Empowerment also continued its support for blended classrooms that include Head Start children.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Iowa HSSCO conducted a survey of 150 early childhood partners in the state in March, 2007 to assess perceptions of the effectiveness of office activities and recommended priorities for the future.

During the legislative session Iowa SCO helped draft preschool talking points and coordinate meetings to ensure the Iowa Head Start Association participated in the planning and advocacy for the new preschool proposal. The office coordinated with state advocacy groups, the state Head Start association and PreKNow to support consistent messages about the importance preschool and the value of Head Start as a collaborative partner.

2. Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs. Describe your accomplishments and outcomes in the eight priority areas.

The Iowa HSSCO work plan called for strengthening partnerships between Head Start programs and child care, community empowerment, public schools, early childhood special education, public health, community action agencies, and Iowa's Family Development and Self-Sufficiency programs.

In the HSSCO survey, 94 percent of respondents thought the SCO was somewhat or very effective at promoting collaboration between agencies and programs. Here are the percentage of, respondents who agreed that collaboration had been enhanced with these groups:

Head Start and Community Action Agencies	89%
Head Start and Area Education Agencies	84%
Head Start and Child Care	82%
Head Start and Public Health	82%
Head Start and Early Childhood Special Education	80%
Head Start and Community Empowerment	80%
Head Start and the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Program	74%
Head Start and preschool/preK	71%

Overall, the survey suggests that most Iowa HSSCO early childhood partners believe the work of the SCO is enhancing collaboration among key constituencies in the field. The important accomplishments and outcomes in 2006 under the eight priority areas are listed below.

#### Health Care

In 2006, the State Collaboration Office began to meet regularly with the Child Health Advocacy Team at the Iowa Department of Public Health. Access to this team helped the office understand public health initiatives aimed at children and families, and led to a networking session the SCO conducted with Head Start Mental and Oral Health Coordinators.

Iowa HSSCO contributed to the State Nutrition Action Plan, outlining a supportive role for Iowa Head Start programs and reporting on current activities to promote fruit and vegetable consumption and provide nutrition education to parents and children. It also supported the development of a new Iowa-based maternal depression screen by the University of Iowa and encouraged Head Start to participate in the initial train-the-trainer event. Five of the 23 trainers came from Head Start or Community Action Agencies.

#### **Oral Health**

Building off the success of its collaborative work in convening the Head Start/Early Head Start Oral Health Work Group 2003, Iowa HSSCO moved forward in 2006 with a new action plan that resulted in these accomplishments:

- a new protocol and guidance sheet covering general vs. direct supervision.
- targeted oral health professionals to sit on Health Services Advisory Committees. All agencies now have such professionals on their committees.
- promoted oral health issues to the wider child care and early education community.
- increased the number of Head Start children receiving fluoride varnishes.

The most significant development in 2006 in the area of health was securing state-funding for a new state dental plan called I-Smiles that will be part of the state's Medicaid plan. The I-Smiles proposal includes a plan to assure a dental home for all children on Medicaid and an increase in Medicaid reimbursement to dentists. It builds an oral health infrastructure to better serve Medicaid children, including those served through Head Start, WIC and Maternal Child Health (MCH, Title V) programs with screenings and arrangements for annual examinations, and other care coordination between public health and private dental practices.

#### Welfare

Iowa's Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) is a TANF and state-funded program that provides intensive support for families at risk of welfare dependency. Eleven of 18 FaDSS grantees also operate Head Start programs. With the support of the statewide FaDSS coordinators, Iowa HSSCO organized a second networking session in 2006 between FaDSS and Head Start family support workers. One participant reports the programs in her agency have begun working together for the first time because of this session.

During 2006, the Iowa SCO coordinator provided additional support to FaDSS by serving as chair of the FaDSS Council.

Iowa HSSCO began conversation with state TANF officials following the release in July, 2006 of the new TANF regulations. The SCO issued clarifications, in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Human Services, about what services are supported by TANF so programs can more clearly determine eligibility. It also contributed to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Iowa Departments of Human Services and Education that included language about the importance of promoting Head Start to children entering the foster care system.

#### Childcare

The most significant accomplishment in 2006 was securing \$400,000 funding for a state-funded Early Head Start pilot initiative. The project is administered by the Iowa HSSCO and awarded grants to three Head Start programs and one community based organization. Projects began in November, 2006 and use a home-based model while encouraging partnerships with family child care providers and kith and kin providers.

In 2006, the Iowa HSSCO coordinator was appointed as the Iowa Department of Education representative on the State Child Care Advisory Council (SCCAC) and served on its executive committee. On the council, the coordinator served as chair of the "systems committee" developed strategies to increase access to high quality providers that accept child care subsidy and increase quality in child care overall. By the end of 2006, child care assistance rates increased and efforts to develop an early childhood professional development system were resurrected. The SCCAC supported expenditures of Quality and I/T earmarks that will fund many projects that will benefit Head Start and other children of low income.

Iowa HSSCO helped Head Start's address issues related to a new Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) that began in 2006 and worked to promote participation in the system. As Iowa's new Early Learning Standards (ELS) were approved and published in 2006, the SCO distributed a document that aligns the ELS with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework.

The Iowa HSSCO continued to show success at increasing the number of Head Start programs receiving child care wrap-around grants to provide full day care for Head Start children. In 2006-07 grant year, the total number of grants to Head Start increased 15 percent serving 20 percent more children (1881 children).

#### Education

The Iowa HSSCO coordinator is a member of the Iowa Department of Education's Early Learning Team. In 2006, the team released new Quality Preschool Program Standards that some Head Start programs are using with their classrooms and partners. At least nine Head Start classrooms participated during the 2005-06 program year. The SCO encouraged participation because it allows Head Start agencies to be active in local collaboration initiatives around quality and to access funding and training opportunities.

- Community Services: no significant activity in 2006.
- Family Literacy Services

Iowa HSSCO supported another year of Iowa Public Television's (IPTV) book club project. Pre/post surveys reveal positive changes in use of dialogic reading strategies by parents and a decline in the amount of time spent watching TV and videos/DVDs.

#### Services to Children with Disabilities

Iowa's IDEA State Performance Plan calls for a dramatic increase in 3-5 year-olds served in the least restricted environment. Iowa HSSCO promoted Head Start programs as appropriate settings for these children, including gathering data to document Head Start's contributions. The 2006 PIR data that show the percentage of Head Start children with disabilities increased to 13% (up 2% from 2005). Ninety-six percent of children with disabilities have IEPs or IFSPs (up 2% from 2005). These efforts combined with Iowa's participation in 2005 in the Expanding Opportunities effort through the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC). In 2006, the emphasis was on implementing our strategic communications plan. NECTAC invited the SCO coordinator to present at the 2006 NECTAC conference on the plan's development.

The most significant achievement in 2006 in the area of children with disabilities was the launch of a collaborative project to establish a Program Wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) system in Iowa. It coordinated with a 3-year-old School Wide PBS that had established PBS in more than 100 school districts. Ten Head Start programs participated in the first cohort that runs through the 2006-07 program year. The Center for Social Emotional Foundations in Early Learning (CSEFEL) has acknowledged Iowa's efforts at providing comprehensive training and technical assistance to support programs to implement Program Wide PBS and, at the same time, build a system capable of delivering the training and assistance on a continual basis. CSEFEL invited Iowa to participate in a pilot effort to launch statewide Program Wide PBS initiatives in 2007. The Iowa HSSCO coordinator will be the state lead in this effort.

- Services to Homeless Children and Families: No significant services in 2006
- 3. Facilitate Head Start's involvement in the development of state policies, plans, processes and decisions.

Besides the evidence above of Head Start's involvement in preschool, oral health, child care policy development and planning, Iowa HSSCO expanded or maintained Head Start representation among all the major early childhood advisory groups.

#### B. Briefly discuss the following aspects of your work:

 Describe how you have supported and collaborated with the Regional Office on national and regional priorities (e.g. Fatherhood, Faith-Based and Community, Healthy Marriage, Youth and Rural Initiatives and TA Network, professional development, Community Action Agencies, State Head Start Association, and other activities).

Iowa HSSCO worked closely with the Regional Office in 2006, meeting three times for face-to-face meetings along with SCO colleagues from other states in the region. Regional priorities have included implementing a risk assessment process to improve PRISM results. This priority connects with the Iowa HSSCO objective to support Iowa Head Stat agencies and IHSA in their efforts to meet and exceed the expectation of the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Survey results indicate that 93 percent believe that the SCO has been somewhat or very effective in meeting this objective. In 2006, no Iowa program receiving a federal monitoring visit had a single area of noncompliance reported.

Iowa HSSCO has supported a number of other national and regional priorities. In <u>Fatherhood</u>, the SCO identified a local qualified expert on the value of the fatherhood role in children's lives and arrange for his services to be available to Head Start programs in Iowa.

In <u>Professional Development</u>, the SCO coordinator served on a number of professional development system committees working on a strategic plan to develop a comprehensive early childhood professional development system. The committee established spending priorities for a new state investment of \$2.2 million obligated for early childhood professional development, including supporting specific projects that address training gaps in the field as well as a broader system development effort.

Iowa HSSCO also supported the Early Childhood Alliance, a group of community college early childhood faculty, in a gathering to support their work on developing common core of courses associated with their early childhood degrees.

The SCO coordinator served as chair of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Iowa. In 2006, this project successfully completed its first self-study and was re-licensed. The SCO coordinator took a leadership role in assisting the project's transfer to the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children, a move that took effect January 1, 2007.

Iowa HSSCO issued guidance on how Head Start teachers can convert an initial license into a standard State of Iowa teacher's license when they lack supervision requirements from trained administrators

#### State Association

Iowa HSSCO believes a strong state association is provides the most valuable tool for developing Head Start-State collaboration. In 2006, the office supported IHSA's efforts to reorganize and increase its activities. It is now poised to hire an executive director for the first time in 2007. Iowa HSSCO made a concerted effort to provide regular communication about state activities with the association's members throughout the year.

The most significant achievement in partnership with IHSA was developing and publishing the 2005 Iowa Head Start Annual Report. (Copies are available at <a href="www.iowaheadstart.org">www.iowaheadstart.org</a>.)

#### **CAP Agencies**

To support Community Action Agencies in Iowa, Iowa HSSCO continued to offer on-site management consulting for two agencies. The SCO also arranged and facilitated a meeting between CAP directors and Head Start Directors (also with Iowa Community Empowerment State

Coordinator)., and brokered an arrangement whereby ICAA's executive director and lobbyist would also served as the formal representative of IHSA to the 2007 legislature.

#### Other Activities

Iowa Community Empowerment is Iowa's answer to North Carolina's SmartStart. Iowa HSSCO has made a priority to improve Empowerment/Head Start relationship, meeting monthly with the State Empowerment Coordinator and the state Empowerment Technical Assistance Team. An analysis of improvement in collaborative activities with Iowa's 58 local Community Empowerment Areas (CEAs) indicates that the dramatic improvements in collaboration seen in previous years are holding. Specifically, analysis of activities in 2004-05 show:

- 47% (27) of CEAs referenced Head Start data in their report (an increase of 2 CEAs or 8% from 2003-04)
- 47% (27) of CEAs provided a variety of services that supported Head Start children and families (an increase of 3 CEAs or 13% from 2003-04)
- 10% (6) of CEAs provided funding to expand the Head Start day or year (an increase of 2 CEAs or 50% from 2003-04)
- 36% (21) of CEAs reported Head Start as a partner in area-wide collaborations for children (an increase of 2 CEAs or 5% from 2003-04
- 10% (6) of programs launched or maintained a joint classroom with Head Start (an increase of 2 CEAs or 50% from 2004-05)

# C. Briefly describe your efforts to support the coordination of Head Start services to Hispanic children and families in your State.

As more Head Start classrooms in Iowa attempt to address the need of Spanish-speaking children, Iowa HSSCO helped arrange for an IHSA-sponsored training on teaching in bilingual classrooms, offering the training to Shared Visions and Even Start teachers across the state.

The Iowa HSSCO made available certified and "refreshed" National Reporting System Spanish language assessors. Many programs have only a small number of Spanish speaking children and have difficulty finding Spanish speaking staff or volunteers who are certified to be assessors.

Iowa HSSCO also served on an advisory group of the state's Division of Latino Affairs in drafting rules and an RFP in an effort to develop a certification curriculum and training for translation services.

## D. How do your responses to the questions above impact your approved work plan for the current or coming year?

As a result of writing this profile and surveying the accomplishments of the office during 2006, the SCO coordinator will include goals in its new 5-year plan that continue the work reflected above that has breakthrough potential for significant system impact or work on critical issues that remains unfinished. While the new grant will include new goals, more than half will continue work discussed in this profile.

<sup>2</sup> This analysis is based on the most currently available annual reports and reflects the analysis conducted in 2006.